

## **STABILIZING LANYARD FOR OPTICAL EQUIPMENT**

### **FIELD OF THE INVENTION**

[01] The present invention relates to a lanyard, utilized in addition to a conventional neck strap, for securing or stabilizing personal optical equipment, such as photography equipment, video equipment, binoculars and the like, against a wearer's body when the optical equipment is not in use, such as, for example, when a user is walking.

Additionally, the lanyard of the invention may be used to stabilize the optical equipment while in use, such as for example, when taking a picture.

### **BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

[02] Personal optical equipment such as photography equipment, video equipment, binoculars and the like are often attached to a neck strap and worn about the neck of a user while not in use. However, neck straps, when utilized alone, do not prevent the equipment from swinging or bouncing uncomfortably while the wearer is walking or leaning. In addition, neck straps alone are not efficient in stabilizing the equipment while in use.

[03] U.S. Patent No. 4,620,653 discloses a holder to tightly retain a stereo player therein and thereby prevent the player from inadvertently falling or bouncing out of the pocket comprising an adjustable belt sized to be securely but comfortably affixed about the waist of a person engaging in vigorous athletic activity.

[04] U.S. Patent No. 5,738,328 discloses a stabilizing lanyard with stirrup for use with cameras and other devices requiring stabilizing firmly free of body movement

[05] U.S. Patent No. 5,775,558 discloses a harness type securing system adapted for use in association with personal equipment which comprises an adjustable harness assembly having pouches coupled to the harness and allowing users to carry the personal equipment in a suspended orientation from the harness.

[06] Despite the advances of the prior art there is still a need for an efficient, lightweight, compact and inexpensive device to stabilize optical equipment against a user's body while the user is walking, and for stabilizing the equipment, especially cameras, while the user is taking a picture. These and other embodiments of the present invention will become apparent to those of skill in the art upon review of this patent specification, claims and drawings.

## **SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION**

[07] It is an object of the present invention to provide a stabilizing lanyard which does not suffer from the disadvantages of the prior art.

[08] According to one embodiment of the present invention there is provided a lanyard for stabilizing optical equipment which includes a strap to encircle a user's midsection and which attaches to the optical equipment. The lanyard is utilized in addition to a conventional neck strap to stabilize the optical equipment against the user's body.

[09] According to another embodiment of the present invention there is provided a method of stabilizing optical equipment against a user. The method includes encircling the midsection of a user with lanyard including an elastic strap which is connected to each side of the optical equipment. The strap is utilized in addition to a conventional neck strap and exerts a resistance to keep the optical equipment against the user.

[10] These and other embodiments of the present invention will become apparent to those of skill in the art upon review of this patent specification, claims and drawings.

## **BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS**

[11] FIG. 1 is a front view of a user 1, wearing lanyard 10 of the invention having strap 12, and connected to camera 5.

[12] FIG. 2 is a side view of user 1 wearing lanyard 10 of the invention having strap 12, and connected to camera 5.

[13] FIG. 3 is a side view of user 1 wearing lanyard 10 of the invention and utilizing strap 12 to stabilize camera 5 while taking a picture.

#### **DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION**

[14] The lanyard of the invention is of a lightweight simple design and allows the wearer to comfortably stabilize optical equipment against his or her body while walking, as well as to stabilize the equipment, especially cameras, while taking pictures.

[15] Referring now to FIGs. 1 and 2, there is illustrated of one embodiment of the lanyard, shown generally as 10, of the present invention as worn by user 1. Lanyard 10 includes body encircling strap 12, where each end of strap 12 is attached to connectors 14, and where each connector 14 secures strap 12 to a convenient location on camera 5. Lanyard 10, is designed to be worn in conjunction with a conventional neck strap 16, typically utilized with optical equipment, and not to support the weight of the optical equipment on its own.

[16] In one embodiment, still referring to FIGs. 1 and 2, strap 12 of lanyard 10 may be made of a fairly elastic material and in practice any suitable material may be utilized. The material may be selected, by way of example, for comfort, fashion, and/or aesthetics. Strap 12 is of a length to comfortably encircle and stabilize a camera, or other piece of optical equipment, against the midsection of the wearer. The length of strap 12 may be increased or decreased, for example, by incorporating an optional length adjustment means 22 into strap 12, as is known in the art, or strap may be manufactured or cut to any specific length. Alternately, strap 12 may be made of or include material that is fairly non-elastic, but whose length may be adjustable by means known in the art such as buckles, cord locks, hook and loop fasteners, and the like.

[17] Suitable examples of materials for strap 12 include braided, knitted or woven elastic, cords, and/or webbing which may be made of natural or synthetic fibers such as cotton, polyester, nylon, polypropylene and the like. The width or diameter of strap 12 is

of a width or diameter comfortable to the user and no specific width or diameter is required. In a preferred embodiment, however, strap 12 is an elastic cord. In another preferred embodiment, strap 12 is an elastic cord which is about 1/16 of an inch or more in diameter.

[18] Still referring to FIGs. 1 and 2, connectors 14 maybe any suitable means to connect strap 12 to camera 5. In one embodiment, shown in the figures, connector 14 is a hook and latch type connector. The connector 14 attaches to camera 5 at a convenient location and preferably utilizes the attachment places 18, located on most cameras, film or digital, for the attachment of a conventional neck strap 16.

[19] Referring now to FIG. 3, lanyard 10 may be utilized to stabilize optical equipment, for example binoculars or cameras, while they are in use. Strap 12 exerts a slight resistance which advantageously and comfortably allows user 1 to steady the optical equipment while, for example, viewing through binoculars or taking a picture. In addition, strap 12 of lanyard 10 will stabilize the optical equipment, while it is not in use, against user 1 and thereby prevent the optical equipment from swinging or bouncing uncomfortably while the user is walking or leaning over.

[20] While the illustrative embodiments of the invention have been described with particularity, it will be understood that various other modifications will be apparent to and can be readily made by those skilled in the art without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. Accordingly, it is not intended that the scope of the claims appended hereto be limited to the examples and descriptions set forth herein, but rather that the claims be construed as encompassing all the features of patentable novelty which reside in the present invention, including all features which would be treated as equivalents thereof by those skilled the art to which this invention pertains.